



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT

October 1, 2013

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** MEGS+ Level 5s and Main Contacts

**FROM:** Mike Radke, Director  
Office of Field Services

**SUBJECT:** Impact on Suspension of MDE Implementation of Common Core

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has had to end all department support for the local implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA). Legislation to allow this work to continue was not passed by the October 1 deadline. Accordingly, any MDE work addressing activities, programs, or initiatives associated with CCSS or SBA must halt by October 1, 2013. See message from Marty Ackley below.

MDE will be seeking guidance and exploring options to understand further how this spending prohibition impacts grant funds, but until further notice MDE will be unable to review or approve Consolidated Applications or Title I School Selection Applications after 5 PM EST on September 30, 2013. Applications will remain in their status as of that time.

MEGS+ will remain open and active for your use; however as noted above, please be aware that MDE is unable to take any action until further notice. Please note that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with approved applications may continue to draw down funds through the cash management system (CMS).

Questions may be directed to the Office of Field Services at (517) 373-3921.

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Friends,

With no action being taken by the Michigan Senate by the October 1 beginning of the 2013-14 state fiscal year, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has had to end all support for the local implementation of the Common Core State Standards and the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

The Michigan legislature inserted language in the Fiscal Year 2013-14 budget that prohibited MDE from appropriating any funds for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards or the Smarter Balanced Assessments unless it received approval through an "affirmative action" by the legislature.

The Michigan House of Representatives took its affirmative action through the adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 11 (HCR 11) last week. The state Senate has not taken any similar action.

"While the Common Core remains Michigan's K-12 content standards and schools will continue to design their local curriculum around them, we are continuing to review the areas of our operations that are affected to comply with the state law, now that we can't provide assistance on the implementation of the Common Core or the Smarter Balanced Assessment," said State Superintendent Mike Flanagan, Director of the Michigan Department of Education.

"This not only impacts local school buildings, but also how we re-tool our work and all of our external contracts," Flanagan said. "So much of what we have been doing with Common Core over the past three years has been ingrained in our work here at MDE."

One of the major impacts of this lack of action by the Senate is that the state is in violation of its federal flexibility waiver to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Michigan will revert back to the federal NCLB requirement that schools have between 89-93 percent of their students proficient in math and reading. Early calculations show only 2.6 percent of school buildings (89) and seven tiny local districts in Michigan meet those thresholds, thus, the rest will be deemed: Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

The federal waiver to NCLB required a state to adopt career- and college-ready standards and provide support to its local schools in implementing those standards. As is its Constitutional and statutory authority, Michigan's State Board of Education chose in 2010 to use the career- and college-ready aligned Common Core State Standards.

The current federal flexibility waiver goes through 2013-14. MDE has been working on the renewal of that waiver, due to the U.S. Department of Education by the end of the year. All of that work on the renewal has ceased.

If the state loses its federal NCLB waiver, the Bottom 5 percent schools will be determined by a previous data method resulting in identifying different schools and causing turmoil with schools never identified on the list and some schools coming off the list, missing legislative deadlines for identifying the Bottom 5 percent of schools and all other legislative deadlines for schools.

This would cause the list of schools on the 2013 Bottom 5 percent list to be 6-12 months behind in their improvement requirements, any may impact the 2012 group, as well.

Another implication of the prohibition of work by MDE means that local schools will lose the opportunity to participate in Smarter Balanced Assessment field testing if the state has to pull out of the Common Core, and accompanying assessment consortium work.

The field testing would have given Michigan students the best chance to experience online testing that will measure the full breadth of career- and college-ready standards in a format that will prepare them for post-secondary success, according to MDE. Michigan will not be able to replicate this type of experience, and risks falling behind by years with regard to implementing the type of online, computer adaptive testing that the legislature has called for previously.

This also means that schools will not have important student academic growth data aligned to career- and college-ready standards for the foreseeable future, to fuel all critical reform efforts such as educator evaluations; school rankings and comparisons; and effective targeting of resources for the lowest-performing schools.

MDE also has requested the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget to take down the MDE website because the Common Core State Standards are integrally related throughout.

"If we cannot expend funds on any information, or support and assistance to local schools, then we have to scrub our entire website and restore pages are they are deemed fit," Flanagan said.

This is the immediate impact on the work we do here at MDE. We will continue to assess any further impact as situations may change.

Martin Ackley, Director  
Office of Public and Governmental Affairs  
Michigan Department of Education